

Parks and Trails Division

The Friends of Dodge County Parks

The Friends of Dodge County Parks is a 501c3 non-profit organization working closely with the Parks and Trails division to encourage and assist Dodge County in providing sufficient park land and variety of recreational and cultural facilities to meet the needs and demands of the County's residents and visitors into the future. The Friends group also provides recommendations for new or updated park and recreational facilities or initiatives. The most visible aspect of the Friends group is in fundraising to provide a source of funds to the County to supplement public funds for park projects. The primary sources of funds for the group comes from the annual Fallfest event at Harnischfeger Park and Jamfest in Mayville for the Gold Star Memorial Trail, as well as memberships and general donations. The Friends group has several designated funds for specific parks (and projects) allowing donors to contribute to parks or projects that especially appeal to them.

Over \$6,200 was raised by Fallfest event in 2017. Fundraising for the Gold Star Memorial Trail continued into 2017 despite meeting the original fundraising goal for Phase 1 of \$650,000.

The Friends group received \$338,684 in total income in 2017, up from \$101,510 in 2016, mostly attributed to the Gold Star Memorial Trail funds received. Total expenses in 2017 were \$18,527, a decrease from \$28,604 in 2016. A total of \$2,315 was contributed directly to Dodge County for reimbursements on projects and other items in 2017. The other major portion of expenses was for the fundraising events (Fallfest and Jamfest). Primary projects of Friends support were the kayak launch at Derge Park and tree plantings at Harnischfeger.

A permanent **Endowment Fund** with the Natural Resources Foundation of Wisconsin was created in 2010 to provide perpetual funding support for the Friends group mission. Up to 5% of the fund value is available annually for pay out to the Friends group for use as they deem necessary. The goal is to increase the Endowment Fund value to a level that provides significant annual funding on a perpetual basis. The Endowment Fund value increased \$3,118 during 2017 to a year end value of \$24,031.

The group launched their **Facebook** page in 2012 to provide park project and event updates and to solicit feedback and information exchange. Parks staff serve as the primary administrators of the page in coordination with the County Parks Facebook Page.

The Officers and Board of Directors of the organization promote and oversee membership, fundraising and organizational operations which includes directing the project funding where requested and needed. The Board hopes to eventually form separate committees to focus on each individual park. To date only Harnischfeger Park and the Gold Star Trail have active fundraising committees. The Harnischfeger committee coordinates the Fallfest fundraising event and volunteer work days, as well as provides input on new developments and improvements at the park. The Gold Star Trail committee coordinates promotions and fundraising campaigns.

FRIENDS OF DODGE COUNTY PARKS, INC. – YEAR END FINANCIALS		
FUND ACCOUNTS	2017	2016
Administrative Fund	847	1,749
Astico Fund	1,754	1,766
Derge Fund	5,062	5,437
Ledge Fund	439	439
Wild Goose Trail Fund	4,640	4,955
Nitschke Mounds Fund	3,006	2,906
Harnischfeger Fund	32,337	26,658
Gold Star Mem. Trail Fund	399,655	89,189
Future Park Fund	245	245
Endowment Fund - Temp	35	74
Undesignated General Fund	10,061	4,930
TOTAL ALL FUNDS	458,082	138,349
Total Revenues	338,684	101,510
Total Expenses	18,527	28,604
NET REVENUE	319,732	71,851
Endowment Fund (12/31 Balance)	\$ 24,031	\$ 20,913

Park staff attend the monthly meetings of the Friends of Dodge County Parks Board of Directors serving as advisor and providing administrative assistance, as well as making funding requests and recommendations for park projects. Input on projects and park needs are also sought from the Board.